

Merry-Go-Round**U.S., Soviet Militarists
In the Driver's Seat****Jack Anderson**

PRESIDENT NIXON'S press conference prediction that there would be a Soviet-American agreement to limit strategic weapons was apparently a bit premature.

Both sides have acknowledged that an escalation of the arms race not only would make this planet a more dangerous place to live but would pile more millions upon the already oppressive financial burden of both nations. Yet the escalation is going on, inexorably, as if it were an irresistible force of nature.

At a recent diplomatic soiree in Moscow, a Soviet official passed pleasantries with an American diplomat. Suddenly, the Russian began speaking intently, nervously pressing his fingertips together. He wanted the American to know, he said, that enlightened Soviet leaders wanted a strategic arms agreement but that they were hampered by the Defense Ministry.

★ ★ ★

VARIATIONS of this scene have been repeated at least two dozen times during the past few weeks. Soviet diplomats have taken aside Americans at cocktail parties and have stopped them in corridors to whisper that the Soviet military are obstructing the SALT talks in Vienna.

The Americans might have responded that the Pentagon has had a similar influence upon the U.S. negotiators, who have been unable to make a proposal until it has been thoroughly reviewed by the brass. In the backrooms, the generals have fought every concession.

They have persuaded President Nixon, for example, to go ahead with installing multiple warheads next month on our intercontinental missiles. Yet the deployment of multiple-headed missiles is the main question that is supposed to be settled in Vienna.

Similarly, the Soviet military have pushed ahead with the testing of multiple warheads and the installation of SS9 missiles. These monsters pack a devastating, 20-megaton wallop capable of knocking out our own hardened, underground missile sites.

★ ★ ★

AT THE SAME TIME that the negotiators were discussing arms control in Vienna, the Soviet Navy also conducted provocative, world-wide maneuvers under the code name, "Okean."

In the Pacific, for example, U.S. Naval Forces have teletyped and radioed in code a staccato of submarine sightings. The list of Russian subs, prowling the sea aortas leading from the U.S. to Vietnam, has now reached 120.

Meanwhile, the negotiators in Vienna are trying desperately to stop the military spending spiral by trading off a U.S. advantage for a Soviet advantage. What the military men are doing, however, seems to counter what the negotiators are saying. Thus, the chances that President Nixon's prediction will come true are now rated less than 50-50.

Copyright 1970